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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED: September 16, 2013
RESUBMITTED: October 14, 2013

A P P R O V E D
_____, 20
MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
(ASSISTANT TO THE COMMISSION)

MEMORANDUM TO THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Subject: Spring Turkey Regulations
Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 19 of 2013

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, authorizes the Director and the Commission to issue orders to manage wild animals in this state.

Discussion and Background:

The spring wild turkey season is designed to maximize hunter opportunity for a satisfactory hunting experience while sustaining a viable wild turkey population. When turkeys were a species of scarcity, traditional spring turkey hunting seasons had restrictive regulations for both public and private land in order to widely disperse hunters to provide a quality recreational experience. As wild turkey populations have flourished, turkey hunters and private landowners have requested greater flexibility in areas where they can hunt. The proposed recommendations are similar to the last three-year regulatory setting cycle and are an effort to provide additional recreational opportunity without impacting the quality of spring turkey hunting.

A person may purchase only one license for the spring turkey hunting season.

License Quotas and Boundary Change

For the 2014, 2015, and 2016 spring turkey season, a total of 114,140 licenses (49,140 General, 65,000 Private) are recommended to be made available through a lottery during the hunter limited hunt periods. Approximately 56,433 square miles of area will be open to wild turkey hunting. Most regulations will remain the same except for these few changes.

The recommended license quota for turkey management unit (TMU) M in the Upper Peninsula (UP) is 6,000 general licenses. This is a decrease of 2,000 from the last cycle. However, this recommended adjustment is expected to more closely match demand and actual license sales and the decrease was supported by local stakeholders. In addition, the Department recommends increasing the maximum general license quota for turkey management unit ZB, located in the "thumb" region of the Southern Lower Peninsula, to 650 for each hunt number. The Department estimates that the turkey population has increased in this area over several years and can sustain an appropriate increase in harvest.

Currently TMU J has two hunts, each one week long. For the past four years, each of these hunts has been undersubscribed. The Department recommends combining both hunts into one two-week hunt for TMU J. Based on reported hunter satisfaction rates and low hunter interference in the surrounding area, the Department does not anticipate an increase in issues if the hunts are combined, but instead, expects that more hunters would participate in the unit.

The Department has received support for this change from local stakeholders, such as the Michigan Wild Turkey Hunters Association (MWTHA), along with the 45th Parallel Gobblers and Cheboygan County chapters of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

The Department also recommends a boundary change for TMU J that would move the Beaver Island group into its own TMU. This proposed TMU B is recommended to have a general license quota of 1,000. The hunt season dates are recommended to mirror TMU J. By managing the Beaver Island group separately, staff would be able to gather hunter-specific data for the islands, better adhere to the management plan and allow for license quota changes more specific to island circumstances. The Beaver Island Wildlife Club is supportive of this change.

Hunt 234- Statewide Guaranteed Hunt

The Department recommends leaving the season structure of the Guaranteed Hunt Period (GHP) comparable to last year but expanding the license availability to allow for purchase throughout the entire season, beginning when leftover limited-quota licenses are available for purchase. GHP licenses are available over the counter only (application is not required).

Tag Removal by Taxidermist

Current regulations for other species such as deer and bear specify that kill tags may be legally removed from the animal by a licensed taxidermist in the course of his or her work. Accordingly, the Department recommends a technical change clarifying that a licensed taxidermist at the location of his or her taxidermist business may lawfully remove the turkey license from the animal.

Mentored Youth Hunting

In an effort to provide clarity regarding the Mentored Youth Hunting (MYH) Program, the Department recommends technical changes to the existing Wildlife Conservation Order language to specify that the MYH license shall include one fall season and one spring season tag and that only a bearded turkey may be harvested during the spring season.

Recommendation:

This order was submitted for information on October 10, 2013, at the Natural Resources Commission Meeting. This item appeared on the Department's September 2013 calendar and may be eligible for approval on November 7, 2013.



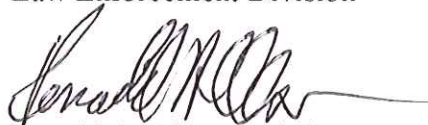
Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
Wildlife Division



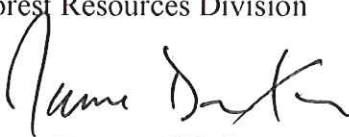
Gary Hagler, Chief
Law Enforcement Division



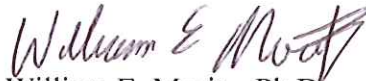
Bill O'Neill, Chief
Forest Resources Division



Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division



James Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division



William E. Moritz, Ph.D.
Natural Resources Deputy

I have analyzed and discussed these recommendations with staff and concur as to matters over which the Director has authority.

Keith Creagh, Director

Date

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDER

Amendment No. 19 of 2013

By authority conferred on the Natural Resources Commission and the Director of the Department of Natural Resources by sections 40107 and 40113a of 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.40107 and 324.40113a, it is ordered that effective November 8, 2013, the following section(s) of the Wildlife Conservation Order shall read as follows:

2.14 Mentored youth hunting program; definition, eligibility; requirements.

Sec. 2.14 (1) The mentored youth hunting program is established in accordance with MCL 324.43517.

(2) As used in this section, "hunting device" means a firearm, crossbow, or bow and arrow that may be lawfully used and possessed during the open season for the game species being hunted.

(3) A person may be eligible to participate as a mentor in the mentored youth hunting program only if all of the following apply:

(a) A mentor shall be at least 21 years of age.

(b) A mentor shall possess a valid license to hunt, other than an apprentice license.

(c) A mentor shall demonstrate proof of previous hunting experience in the form of a previous hunting license, other than an apprentice license, or a certificate of completion for hunter safety training issued to that individual by this state, another state, a province of Canada, or another country.

(d) A mentor shall ensure that any hunting device possessed by a mentored youth is sized appropriately to fit the physical abilities of the mentored youth.

(e) The mentor shall maintain no more than arm's length distance from a mentored youth at all times that the mentored youth is in possession of a hunting device.

(4) A person less than 10 years old may lawfully possess a mentored youth hunting license and may hunt with a mentor only if all of the following apply:

(a) The mentored youth shall demonstrate, at the request of any law enforcement officer, the operation of their hunting device's safety features, as applicable.

(5) No more than a total of two hunting devices may be possessed by a mentor and those mentored youth that they are responsible for while hunting.

(6) A deer kill tag issued under the mentored youth hunting license shall be valid for any deer in any deer management unit. Mentored youths shall not hunt deer with a firearm on public land until such time as the legislature allows youths 10 to 13 years old to hunt deer with a firearm on public land.

(7) The one spring season and one fall season turkey kill tag issued under the mentored youth hunting license shall be valid on public or private land in any open turkey hunting unit.

(8) A mentor who causes or allows a mentored youth to engage in an unlawful act as defined in Part 435 or Part 401 of 1994 PA 451, or an order or interim order issued under these parts shall be punishable as the principal offender. Nothing in this order shall negate or diminish the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian as provided in MCL 324.43517.

3.300a Wild turkey population, harvest quotas.

Sec 3.300a. (1) The spring wild turkey hunt seasons and quotas for general licenses valid on all land within the listed unit shall be as shown in table 6:

TABLE 6
Spring Wild Turkey General License Seasons and Quotas

Hunt Numbers	Open Units	Hunt Seasons	License Quota
101	A	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 14 days.	5,500
102	B	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 14 days.	1,000
103	E	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days.	850
104	E	Begins 7 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	850
105	F	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days.	2,500
106	F	Begins 7 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	2,500
107	J	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 14 days.	4,000
108	K	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days.	4,000
109	K	Begins 7 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	4,500
110	M	Begins on the Monday closest to April 20 and continues through May 31	6,000
111	ZA	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days.	1,200
112	ZA	Begins 7 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	1,200
113	ZA	Begins 14 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	1,200
114	ZA	Begins 21 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues through May 31	1,200
115	ZB	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days.	650
116	ZB	Begins 7 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	650
117	ZB	Begins 14 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	650
118	ZB	Begins 21 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues through May 31	650
119	ZC	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	600
120	ZC	Begins 7 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	600
121	ZC	Begins 14 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	600
122	ZC	Begins 21 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues through May 31	600
123	ZD	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days.	10
124	ZD	Begins 7 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	10
125	ZD	Begins 14 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	10
126	ZD	Begins 21 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues through May 31	10
127	ZE	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days.	500
128	ZE	Begins 7 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	500
129	ZE	Begins 14 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	500
130	ZE	Begins 21 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues through May 31	500
131	ZF	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days.	1,300
132	ZF	Begins 7 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 7 days	1,300
133	ZF	Begins 14 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues through May 31	3,000

(2) The spring wild turkey hunt seasons and quotas for private land only licenses which are not valid on county, state or federal lands, except that they may be used to hunt Fort Custer military lands with permission, shall be as shown in table 7:

TABLE 7
Spring Wild Turkey Private Land License Seasons and Quotas

Hunt Numbers	Open Unit	Hunt Seasons	License Quota
301	ZZ	Begins on Monday closest to April 20 and continues for 14 days	65,000

(3) Hunt number 234 begins 14 days after the Monday closest to April 20 and continues through May 31. Licenses for hunt number 234 are valid on private and public land in spring turkey management units, except public lands in southern Lower Peninsula wild turkey management unit (unit ZZ). Individuals who possess a valid license for hunt number 234 may hunt Fort Custer military land with permission.

(4) An individual may purchase a license for hunt number 234 when leftover licenses are made available for purchase through May 31; no application is required.

(5) If any limited quota licenses remain after the drawing, an unsuccessful applicant may purchase one leftover license on a first-come, first-served basis for a one-week period. Any limited-quota licenses that remain after this one-week period will be made available to all hunters on a first-come, first-served basis.

(6) The wildlife division chief may recommend to the director the need for any appropriate significant changes in quotas based on experience with population densities, hunter satisfaction levels, hunter application rates, or survey results. The director, in consultation with the chairman or vice-chairman of the natural resources commission, may make changes in quotas in a turkey management unit to address this new information.

(7) It is unlawful to purchase more than one Michigan spring turkey hunting license.

3.301 Wild turkey hunting, unlawful acts; exceptions.

Sec. 3.301 (1) A person hunting wild turkey shall not use or possess afield an electronic device to simulate, replicate or imitate wild turkey calls or sounds, or an electronic, mechanical or live decoy. It shall be unlawful to use a dog to hunt wild turkey during the spring wild turkey season. It shall be unlawful to take a wild turkey while the wild turkey is in a tree. It shall be unlawful to make use of bait to aid in the taking of a wild turkey. For the purposes of this regulation, "bait" means a substance composed of grain, fruit, vegetables, or other food placed to lure or entice wild turkeys. This does not apply to standing farm crops under normal agricultural practices, or other natural growing grains, fruits, or vegetables. For the purposes of this section, "mechanical decoy" means any device that by design or construction uses motion as a visual stimulus to attract a wild turkey except a wind sock or similar decoy body anchored at a fixed point into the ground and whose only motion is derived exclusively by power of the natural wind.

(2) A person 10 years of age and older may only take a wild turkey during the spring wild turkey season if the turkey has a beard and is taken within the unit and hunt period specified on the spring wild turkey license issued to that person. Youth under 10 years of age may hunt wild turkey subject to the mentored youth hunting program as described in section 2.14 of this order and shall only take a turkey if the turkey has a beard during the spring wild turkey season. A person shall not take or possess more than one bearded turkey during the spring wild turkey season.

(3) A person 10 years of age and older may only take a wild turkey during the fall wild turkey season if the turkey is taken within the unit and hunt period specified on the fall wild turkey license issued to that person. Youth under 10 years of age may hunt wild turkey subject to the mentored youth hunting program as described in section 2.14 of this order. A person shall not take or possess more than one turkey during the fall wild turkey season for each kill tag issued to that person.

3.302 Wild turkey; lawful possession; validation of license; unlawful acts.

Sec. 3.302 (1) Immediately upon killing a turkey, a person shall validate their license by notching out the required information as instructed on the license and shall securely attach the license around a leg of the turkey.

(2) It shall be unlawful to possess or transport a turkey unless the turkey license is securely attached to a leg of the turkey and the required information is notched on the turkey license.

(a) The turkey license attached to the leg of the turkey may be cut and removed from the specimen by a licensed taxidermist at the location of their taxidermy business at any time following the recording of the license number and completion of the taxidermy tag.

(3) The holder of a private land wild turkey license shall only take a turkey on privately owned land within the management unit and during the hunting period specified on the private land wild turkey license.

(a) A private land wild turkey license is not valid on county, state, or federal lands except with permission on enclosed controlled-access military lands.

12.603 "Spring wild turkey management unit B" defined.

Sec. 12.602 "Spring wild turkey management unit B" means that portion of Charlevoix county identified as the beaver island group, or those islands (beaver island, garden island, high island, hog island, gull island, trout island,

whiskey island, etc.) and portions of Charlevoix county which are north of the T35N-T36N township line extending east-west across lake Michigan.

12.610 "Spring wild turkey management unit J" defined.

Sec. 12.610 "Spring wild turkey management unit J" means all of Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, and Otsego counties except those portions of Charlevoix county defined in section 12.603 "spring wild turkey management unit B".

12.651 "Wild turkey management unit YY" defined.

Sec. 12.651 Wild turkey management unit YY means all of Allegan, Barry, Bay, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Clinton, Eaton, Genesee, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Huron, Ingham, Ionia, Isabella, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent Lapeer, Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Midland, Montcalm, Muskegon, Oakland, Ottawa, Saginaw, Sanilac, Shiawassee, St. Clair, St. Joseph, Tuscola, Van Buren, and Washtenaw counties.

12.619 Repealed. Am 19, 2013, Eff. Nov 7, 2013

Issued on this 7th day of November, 2013.

Approved as to matters over which the Natural Resources Commission has authority.

Timothy L. Nichols, Chairman
Natural Resources Commission

Approved as to matters over which the Director has authority.

Keith Creagh
Director